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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 IO-13 AID-05 SCCT-01 ACDA-07 /094 W
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P 211344Z MAY 76
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9930
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 5253

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, MARR, PFOR, KE, XW, UG, SO
SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIAL ON KENYAN SECURITY SITUATION

1. IN THE COURSE OF MAY 20 MEETING WITH VISITING DOD REPS AND EMBOFFS, KENYAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE PERMSEC JEREMIAH KIEREINI PROVIDED FOLLOWING GOK PERCEPTION OF CURRENT MILITARY THREAT TO KENYA FROM SOMALIA AND UGANDA:

A) SOMALIA. GOK CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT LONG-RANGE THREAT POSED BY SOMALI IRREDENTIST CLAIMS TO LARGE PART OF NORTHERN KENYA INHABITED BY ETHNIC SOMALIS. KIEREINI ESPECIALLY WORRIED ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI MILITARY CONFLICT IN OGADEN WHICH, IF FOUGHT ON CONVENTIONAL WAR BASIS, WOULD REQUIRE KENYA TO INTERVENE ON ETHIOPIAN SIDE IN ACCORDANCE WITH NAIROBI-ADDIS DEFENSE AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, KENYANS PRESENTLY FEEL THIS TYPE OF CONFLICT LESS LIKELY THAN ETHIOPIAN-SOMALI CLASH OVER TFAI, PERHAPS ACCOMPANIED BY
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DIVERSIONARY SOMALI GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN THE OGADEN.

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IN THIS CONNECTION KIEREINI SAID EPMY EXTREMELY UPSET WITH GOK'S LENIENT HANDLING OF BAND OF ARMED SOMALI "SHIFTAS" (GUERRILLAS) WHO WERE RECENTLY ORDERED DEPORTED BY A NAIROBI COURT FOLLOWING THEIR CAPTURE IN NORTHERN KENYA AFTER UNSUCCESSFUL INCURSION INTO ETHIOPIA (NAIROBI 5009) NOTAL). KIEREINI EMPHASIZED THAT ETHIOPIA-SOMALI CONFLICT ALONG LINES OF LATTER SCENARIO WOULD NOT RPT NOT ACTIVATE KENYAN-ETHIOPIAN PACT AND INDICATED KENYAN INTERVENTION WOULD BE MOST IMPROBABLE.

B) UGANDA. KIEREINI'S REMARKS SUGGEST THAT FOR TIME BEING AT LEAST GOK REGARDS UGANDA AS MORE SERIOUS IMMEDIATE THREAT. ACCORDING KENYAN ANALYSIS OF UGANDA'S MILITARY CAPABILITIES, AMIN COULD NOT SUSTAIN ACTIVE HOSTILITIES WITH KENYA FOR MORE THAN ABOUT THREE DAYS. IN THAT TIME, HOWEVER, UGANDAN ARMY COULD INITIATE LAND AND/OR AIR ATTACKS ON POINTS IN WESTERN KENYA WHICH AMIN RECENTLY CLAIMED ON BASIS HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS. KIEREINI IS WORRIED THAT, IF KENYAN ARMED FORCES ARE INCAPABLE OF "HITTING BACK", GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN SERIOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL TROUBLE WITH HEAVY CRITICISM OF ARMED FORCES' LACK OF PREPAREDNESS IN PRESS, PARLIAMENT AND AMONG PUBLIC AT LARGE. IF ARMY MADE SCAPEGOAT, KIEREINI SAID "ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN".

2. COMMENT: KIEREINI'S REMARKS WERE OBVIOUSLY PITCHED AT PRESENTING STRONG CASE FOR EARLIEST POSSIBLE DELIVERIES OF U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO UPGRADE KENYA'S REAL OR AT LEAST APPARENT DEFENSE CAPABILITIES. HIS PRESENTATION WAS STRONGEST TO DATE ON THEME THAT RAPID DELIVERY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT NEEDED TO BOLSTER ARMY/CIVILIAN MORALE AS WELL AS TO DETER POTENTIAL ADVERSARIES IN REGION FROM ATTACKING KENYA.
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